CHAPTER TEN POST-EVENT ACTIVITIES

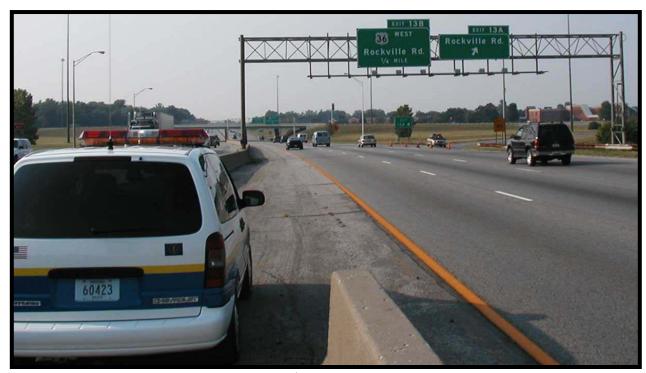


Figure 10-1 Field Observation of Traffic Management Plan Implementation

PURPOSE 😺 🍶 🐠

This chapter covers the fifth and final phase, post-event activities, of managing travel for planned special events. It identifies pertinent activities that should be included in the evaluation of local and regional traffic operations for planned special events. chapter presents an evaluation framework that describes advance planning considerations and the importance of evaluation in managing travel for planned special events, particularly the integration of data and findings into future planning activities for all planned special events in a region. chapter also examines the three primary products of the post-event activities phase: participant evaluation, post-event debriefing, and post-event report.

INTRODUCTION & & W

The last event patron has left the venue site, the command post is closed, and traffic has once again returned to normal. The traffic management team is finally finished with this planned special event...well, not really. Now comes the final phase of managing travel for planned special events, where participating stakeholders and volunteers can look back on what took place and evaluate what happened. While post-event evaluation may mark the final stakeholder activity for this special event, it should be considered as the first step in planning for the next planned special event. The program planning phase utilizes lessons learned and evaluation results from one planned special event to develop products, such as policies and regulations and permanent infrastructure deployment, for improving travel management for all planned special events occurring in a region.

No matter how thorough the traffic management plan, chances are excellent not everything happened as expected. Maybe it was an oversight or an unexpected glitch. Perhaps some elements worked better than expected, and it turns out that all the resources allocated were not needed. Whatever the case, the evaluation phase is where the plan should be compared with what actually happened and appropriate decisions be made as to what to do differently the next time. Even if the same planned special event was handled dozens of times previously, there are adjustments that can be made based on the most recent experience.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK & &

Overview

The first steps in the evaluation of the traffic management plan implemented for the planned special event take place during the event operations planning phase. Knowing ahead of time that a post-event evaluation will occur allows participants to make provisions for the review. In particular, this means collecting data during the event, which can be used as part of the review process. At a minimum, this would include data indicating how the system performed and a log of what took place during the event. For example, Figure 10-2 shows technicians installing an electronic vehicle

counter on an exit lane serving a parking area at a fair. Figure 10-3 shows a traffic management team member maintaining a log of freeway service patrol motorist assists during the day-of-event. Data collection activities also include surveying of event patrons and the public to get their perspective on how well elements of the traffic management plan worked.



Figure 10-2
Electronic Vehicle Counter Installation⁽¹⁾



Figure 10-3
Maintenance of Freeway Service Patrol
Assist Log

Table 10-1 summarizes key post-event activities.

Table 10-1 **Key Post-Event Activities**

ACTION

- Review measures of effectiveness identified in event operations planning phase.
- Compile agency measures of effectiveness.
- Compile performance evaluation data.
- Conduct stakeholder participant debriefing.
- Conduct event patron survey.
- Conduct public survey.
- Conduct a post-event debriefing meeting.
- Prepare a post-event report.

Measures of Effectiveness

Measures of effectiveness (MOEs) represent quantitative measures that give some insight into how effectively a unit is performing. MOEs are measures of activity that, while not reflecting performance directly, show workload and trends. To evaluate how well the traffic management plan worked, some form of measurement is necessary. In addition to telling stakeholders how effective their plan was, the measurements provide transportation professionals the means to demonstrate to others, including the media and elected officials, how well the plan may have worked

There are two areas of effectiveness that should be measured. *internal* and *external*:

- Internal measures are actions taken by the traffic management team that may not be apparent to the public. For example, while the public would note a traffic incident being cleared, they would not be aware of the total number of traffic incidents handled.
- Examples of internal data, which can be measured, are indicated in Table 10-2.
- Internal measures are beneficial to stakeholders in helping them evaluate traffic management team activity.

Table 10-2 Internal Measures of Effectiveness

MEASURE

- Number of messages displayed on changeable message signs
- Number of messages broadcast on highway advisory radio
- Number of traffic incidents handled
- Number of messages transmitted between stakeholders
- Number of traffic signal timing changes
- Number of times a ramp(s) was closed and time/duration of closure(s)
- External measures are readily identifiable by the public during a planned special event. The volume of traffic on primary and alternate routes represent two examples.
- External measures are clearly experienced by most spectators attending a special event and are factors most likely to be noted by the public.
- External measures are likely to be viewed as more important by those outside the traffic management team, such as transportation system users and community interest stakeholders.
- Table 10-3 presents a list of external measures.

Table 10-3 External Measures of Effectiveness

MEASURE

- Volume of traffic on major routes
- Volume of traffic on alternate routes
- Volume of traffic entering and exiting the site and parking areas
- Hours of delay
- Number of event patrons and participants utilizing transit to and from the event
- Travel times
- Modal split
- Average vehicle occupancy

- Stakeholders may measure hours of delay by predefining what is considered congestion and noting how long the congestion lasts.
- While external measures provide hard statistics to demonstrate the plan's effectiveness, softer measures may also be beneficial. A survey of attendees may show how effective they perceived the traffic management plan. Their level of satisfaction with ease of access, quality of traveler information, and other activities can provide insights into how the users of the system view the effectiveness of the plan that was implemented.

Before deciding what to measure, it is important to decide how to evaluate the traffic management plan and the performance of the traffic management team. This decision may be driven, in part, by difficulties experienced during previous planned special events, political considerations, or a need to demonstrate the value of particular tools used during the event.

Integration with Program Planning Process

The evaluation must be more than an afterthought to gain the maximum benefit from it. As part of the program planning process, the evaluation should be considered from the initiation of the process through its conclusion. If the evaluation is being done for the first time, those who are putting the plan together have to look at the goals and then design the evaluation to measure whether the goals have been met.

If previous evaluations have been done, even if they were done for another event, the results of those evaluations should be examined before the traffic management plan is designed. In the case of an unrelated event, there may be some lessons learned that

could be applied to this new event. If this is a recurring event, previous evaluations would have more specific insights that can be applied.

Since evaluation will be taking place throughout the planning process and during the event itself, it is important that the evaluation steps, goals and objectives be established during the program planning phase or early in the event operations planning phase for a specific planned special event.

Finally, as the event concludes, it is also important that a mechanism be created to take what is learned in the evaluation of a specific planned special event and put it in a form that allows the evaluation results to be applied to future events.

Application to Future Events

Whether the event is a one-time only happening or an annual occurrence, what has been learned through the evaluation can contribute toward proactively improving travel management for all planned special events occurring in a region.

To be beneficial for future planned special events, the results of the evaluation should be documented and made accessible. In the case of a one-time only event, the evaluation may show both general and specific insights, which can be used for other future planned special events. These could include areas such as traveler information, interagency communications, and the planning process itself

For recurring events, a file providing the cumulative benefit of lessons learned will help sharpen the traffic management plan developed for each new occurrence. It is also important to remember that with recur-

ring events, slight changes in circumstances will require modifications to the plan.

PARTICIPANT EVALUATION & &

Stakeholder Debriefing

At the conclusion of the planned special event, a debriefing session should be held. The stakeholder debriefing is an opportunity to bring together those involved and impacted by the planned special event. In it, these individuals, and the groups they represent, can compare what the plan called for and what actually took place. They can also examine areas the plan may not have addressed but turned out to be issues in hindsight. All of those who were involved in creating the traffic management plan, as well as key people who played a role during the event itself, should be present for this session. This includes stakeholders forming the event planning team and traffic management team. Table 10-4 lists elements of a stakeholder debriefing.

Table 10-4 Elements of a Stakeholder Debriefing

ELEMENT

- Introductions of individuals and the roles they played (if not obvious)
- Explanation that the debriefing is not designed to find blame for anything which may have gone wrong, but to identify areas of improvement for future planned special events
- Distribution of a chronology of the special event, preferably one which melds individual agencies' own chronologies
- Review of the timeline of events
- Discussion of other areas of concern
- Next steps to incorporate lessons learned

Stakeholders include anyone who had a role or was affected by the planned special event. This certainly includes the transportation and public safety professionals who devel-

oped the plan and were involved in its execution. However, other stakeholders also have a strong interest, even if they had no part in creating the plan. For example, businesses that may have been affected by the special event, due to closed roadways limiting access, are stakeholders with a strong financial stake in the event.

The debriefing process should involve those directly involved in traffic and parking management during the event. This includes traffic management team members stationed at the command post, at the transportation management centers (TMC), and in the field. While they may not be present at the debriefing session, the viewpoints of other stakeholders should also be considered during the debriefing process. Figure 10-4 highlights Indiana State Police debriefing protocol for officers in-charge (OIC) of traffic control during the Brickyard 400 auto race.

The debriefing should not be viewed as a "finger-pointing" or "blame" session. If it is perceived that way, stakeholders will tend not to be frank about any of their own shortcomings and will more likely focus on defending themselves. To ensure involvement of all relevant stakeholders and to encourage their candid comments, it should be made clear that the debriefing session is not a time to blame anyone for something which may have gone wrong during the event.

A log or chronology of what took place during the event should be used to guide the discussion. Ideally, this log will incorporate the activities of all stakeholders so the events can be seen in the light of other actions that took place on the day-of-event. This log may be kept by a representative at the command post or at the TMC. If a master log is not kept, individual agencies can share their own chronologies before the

The identified O.I.C. (or first name on detail list) will be in charge of the detail and responsible for entire operation of detail. This person will be responsible for forwarding to the appropriate Zone Commander, not later than five (5) days following the detail, a Supplemental Incident Report covering each day of Qualifications and Race Day, containing the following information.

- (1) Location by number and zone.
- (2) List each unit assigned to the location by name, P.E., time spent on detail and travel time.
- (3) Heavy traffic flow times at location.
- (4) Comment on how location operated.
- (5) Any persons arrested by personnel on your detail and charges.
- (6) Any recommendations you feel will improve the operation of this location. Use diagram if needed.

Figure 10-4
Indiana State Police Debriefing Protocol for Brickyard 400⁽²⁾

meeting and these can then be merged into a single document. During the event, end-of-day review meeting notes should be examined to focus on actual situations and modifications that were incorporated into the plan.

The evaluation will compare the plan with what actually took place. Actions, whether considered good or bad, that deviated from the plan should be noted. It is not enough to simply note what was different than expected, but *why* it differed from the plan. Stakeholders should also be candid about what they would do differently based on their experience during the event.

If the planned special event is a recurring one, lessons learned should be documented so that when a traffic management plan is developed for the next event occurrence, the plan addresses past lessons learned. Even if the event represents a one-time activity, the lessons learned should still be documented. Many of the lessons may have application for the next planned special event and can be used in developing traffic management plans

for similar planned special events or future events occurring at the same venue.

Patron Survey

Although the goal is to keep traffic moving on all of the transportation facilities, the patrons are the ultimate customers of everyone involved in the traffic management of the planned special event. It is largely for their benefit the traffic management plan was created in the first place, and they are the ones likely to suffer the greatest consequences if the plan does not work. Therefore, the viewpoint of event patrons is needed if a credible evaluation of the plan is to be done.

It is impossible to question everyone who attended the event, but a survey of attendees will give insight into the patrons' opinions. Unless measuring statistics for use in future event travel forecasting, it is not necessary that a scientific survey be done either. What is important is that a cross-section of patrons be surveyed in order to identify common threads. For example, if a significant number of patrons say traveler information was

inaccurate, it will become clear that aspect of the plan needs to be reexamined.

As shown in Table 10-5, the patron survey can take several forms. Appendix D contains an Internet-based event patron evaluation survey for those attending the 2003 Fair Saint Louis festival. The patron survey probably will not be able to identify problems in great detail, but combined with record keeping by the participating stakeholders, the survey should be able to focus on where problems occurred.

Table 10-5 Types of Event Patron Surveys

TYPE

- Comment cards event patrons can fill-out
- Surveyors who question attendees
- Solicited and unsolicited e-mailed comments

The survey should be brief in order to encourage a response. Yes or no type questions are easily answered. Sample questions for possible inclusion in a patron survey include:

- Were you aware of any special travel information before the event?
- Did you find information provided enroute to the event (e.g., via signs, radio) helpful?
- Did you experience any unexpected problems approaching the venue?
- Do you have any suggestions or other comments you wish to offer?

Public Survey

The public survey takes in a wider audience than the patrons. This includes those who may have been impacted by the planned special event even though they did not attend the event. Since this is a larger and more diverse group of stakeholders, it may be more difficult to identify and survey them

Methods for reaching the public include survevs in rest areas along alternate routes and approach routes to the event, solicitations via websites, and comments provided by phone and mail. Surveys may be mailed to homeowners and businesses in the area affected by the special event to solicit their opinions. Sample questions for possible inclusion in public survey include:

- Were you aware of the event before it took place?
- If you were aware of the event beforehand, would you have altered your plans based on that information?
- Did you change your plans or schedule as a result of the event?
- How would you evaluate the effectiveness of traffic management efforts for this event (poor, good, excellent)?
- Do you have any additional comments or suggestions based on your experience?

An effort must be made to collate all comments from widespread locations to be certain all input is considered. Specific outreach may be made to members of the public who were directly impacted by the event. Businesses, residents, and transit riders are a few of those who may have experienced impacts caused by the planned special event. Since these individuals can be found at easily identifiable locations, or perhaps actively participated in the review and comment of the traffic management plan during the event operations phase, it is easier to survey these stakeholders.



A post-event debriefing should be held to review what took place. The purpose of the debriefing is to: (1) examine what took place, (2) compare it to what was expected to happen, (3) identify what worked well, and (4) determine areas of improvement for future planned special events.

Meeting Organization

Ideally, the post-event debriefing should be planned during the event operations planning phase and before the event takes place. If that does not happen, the debriefing should still be held, but it may be more difficult to get full participation by all involved stakeholders.

The meeting should be scheduled at least a few days after the event, giving traffic management team members some time to absorb what took place during the event and an opportunity to put it into perspective. However, the meeting should not be delayed too long after the event so memories of what took place remain fresh.

The place and timing of the meeting should be such that maximum attendance is realized. Considerations should include: (1) the rotating schedules of those who may attend, (2) ease of access to the meeting location, and (3) potential conflicts with other events.

If there were significant interagency conflicts during the planning of the event, or during the event itself, a neutral location and moderator may improve dialogue during the meeting.

If these types of conflicts were not a problem, consideration should be given to having one of the traffic management team supervisors or incident commander lead the meeting. Whatever the case, the moderator should be skilled in involving all the participants and in digging into responses to get to the root of any stated problems.

If the traffic management plan included a transportation management center, there may also be some advantages to holding the meeting at the TMC. Figure 10-5 shows a meeting room located inside a TMC. As indicted in the figure, there may be additional resources in the TMC which can be used, and having it available visually can help participants better understand what took place during the planned special event.



Figure 10-5 TMC Meeting Room

Meeting Agenda

It is important to remember that the postevent debriefing is not designed to be a time to blame individuals or agencies for what took place during the event. This should be reflected in the agenda developed for the meeting. It should clearly state the intended purpose of the meeting. This will help keep meeting attendees focused and provide added assurance that the meeting is designed to identify successes and lessons learned.

Stakeholders can agree on a general outline for the debriefing even before the event. This helps assure the debriefing covers topics of interest to all participants and not designed to be biased against any stakeholder. Further details of the agenda can be filled in after the event and when problems requiring closer examination can be identified. Again, it would be beneficial if all participants had input into revising the agenda to make certain all concerns are addressed.

Table 10-6 lists the broad topic areas that should be covered in the post-event debriefing.

Table 10-6 Post-Event Debriefing Meeting Agenda Topics

TOPIC AREA

- Purpose of meeting
- The planning process
- Interagency communications
- Traffic management in and around the venue
- Traffic management outside of the event site
- Traveler information, including media
- Lessons learned

Identification of Key Successes and Lessons Learned

The purpose of the post-event debriefing is not to just identify what could have been done better but to note what was successful. As has been the case from the start of the event operations planning process through the event itself, multiple viewpoints are helpful as stakeholders identify key successes and lessons learned. Depending upon perspective, one element of the plan may be viewed as a success by one party and seen as an area needing improvement by another.

Identifying these areas can be accomplished as each stakeholder individually reviews its actions leading up to and going through the event and as the stakeholders, as a group, review what took place.

It is helpful if participants are asked to identify, before the post-event debriefing, what they see as key successes and lessons learned. It may also prove beneficial if these notes are shared among the participants before the meeting to help facilitate discussion

While identifying these points are very useful, it has little value unless there is some way to identify how to apply what is learned to the next planned special event. No one individual should be expected to serve as either the group's or their agency's corporate memory. The successes and lessons learned must be chronicled so that those stakeholders who are responsible for planning the next planned special event will be able to tap the wisdom of those who have done this before.

As an example, the following represents an excerpt, regarding traffic management and operations during Daytona Beach, FL Race Week (e.g., Daytona 500) and Bike Week, from the minutes of a regular, bi-monthly Volusia County (FL) Freeway Incident Management Team meeting: (3)

Race Week was February 14th to February 17th. Traffic was very heavy each day of the races. Friday the 15th had problems in Ormond Beach. There was an unexpected large outbound towards Ormond Beach. Saturday, Florida Highway Patrol, Ormond Beach PD, Daytona Beach PD, Volusia County Traffic Engineering, FDOT and Daytona Beach Traffic Engineering met to discuss traffic patterns and staffing for Ormond Beach so Friday's problems would not happen during the outbound of the Daytona 500 Race. Sunday's traffic was extremely heavy for the inbound. The free parking lot entrance on Williamson will need to be larger for next year. The

traffic trying to enter this parking lot could not enter fast enough so, this area became grid locked. This area was grid locked from northbound Williamson to Beville, eastbound and westbound on Beville at Williamson further than the view of the traffic cameras. Capt. Duncan enforced a rolling roadblock on I-4 to stop traffic from entering this area. This gave traffic time to get into the parking lot. Video was collected of the new Pedestrian Overpass. This overpass was successfully used by thousands of race fans.

• Bike Week was March 1st to March 10th. Port Orange reported problems at Nova Road and Dunlawton. Mr. Lester stated they went out to this location to see if anything could be done with the traffic signal to alleviate the traffic congestion. Unfortunately, the signal was at its maximum timing and nothing could be changed.

POST-EVENT REPORT



Table 10-7 presents an outline of a typical post-event report.

Report Organization

A report that reviews the planned special event is necessary to document what was learned. By clearly outlining the material in the report, it becomes easier to identify the key successes and lessons learned. It also makes it easier to go back to the report and look at particular aspects of the traffic management plan implemented when planning the next planned special event.

Since the process of handling the planned special event follows a timeline, the easiest way to organize the report may involve reviewing what took place chronologically.

An alternative method of organizing the report concerns dividing it by subject areas such as traffic management, traveler information, command center operation, and communications. Since some areas overlap, there should be references in the report to other sections, which may have application in multiple areas.

Table 10-7 Outline of Post-Event Report

REPORT ORGANIZATION

- Outline report topics.
- Document products of the event operations planning phase.
- Identify key successes.
- Present lessons learned.
- Identify improvements for future events.
- Configure to serve as a working document for future special event planning.
- Review chronologically what took place.
- Summarize both positive and negative aspects.
- Include all stakeholder viewpoints.

OPERATIONAL COST ANALYSIS

- Examine operational costs.
- Include staffing, overtime, and equipment for each involved agency.
- Identify potential cost savings.
 - o Reallocation of personnel
 - Division of responsibilities
 - Use of technology
- Include total staffing, overtime, and equipment for all agencies.

QUALITATIVE EVALUATION

- Include survey of stakeholders.
- Include survey of event patrons.
- Include survey of public.

QUANTITATIVE EVALUATION

- Provide numerical picture of the event.
 - o Costs
 - o Hours saved
 - Traffic incidents handled
 - o Passengers carried on various modes.
- Present cost/benefit analysis.

The report should summarize both positive and negative aspects. Remember, this is not designed to be a public relations piece to promote the handling of the planned special event but a working document to assist future special event planning. If differing perspectives are noted during the debriefing process and there is not consensus on how to address a particular situation, all stakeholder viewpoints should be documented.

Table 10-8 lists the elements that should be included in a post-event report. As with the post-event debriefing, the post-event report should not blame individuals or organizations for anything that did not go well. The report should provide a factual recounting of the special event, including planning the event itself and what took place during the post-event debriefing. If opinions are noted in the report, then the opinions should be segregated from the factual information and noted as opinions.

Table 10-8 Elements of a Post-Event Report

ELEMENT

- A copy of the original traffic management
- A combined chronology of the event, incorporating actions by all participants
- List of recommended improvements
- Statistical information (e.g., number of traffic incidents, number of CMS and HAR messages).
- Survey results
- General comments by participants

Operational Cost Analysis

Part of the evaluation process is to look at the operational costs of managing the planned special event. Expenses such as staffing, equipment and overtime should be noted by the agency incurring the expense.

This information should be broken down into categories that allow others to understand the costs and the specific efforts associated with the expenditures.

In the same way, operational decisions can be reviewed to identify areas that can be improved. Operational costs can also be re-

viewed with areas of potential cost saving identified. In some cases, these expenses may be in areas where the reallocation of personnel would result in reduced expenses or improved operations. In other areas, the use of technology may result in savings.

While individual stakeholders are responsible for gathering information on their own costs, there is also benefit in merging the figures of all agencies to have a better picture of total expenses for personnel and equipment. This may also provide opportunities to see how dividing responsibilities in different ways could result in cost savings. Among the costs that should be analyzed are overtime expenses, costs of deploying equipment, equipment rental costs, additional communications expenses, and expenses for public information efforts.

Qualitative Evaluation

The qualitative evaluation, while based on softer measures such as opinion and perspective, still provides a very valuable measure of the success in handling the planned special event. This is especially true when measuring patron and public views on the event. Quantitative measures may be easier to manage, but qualitative judgments may help determine the success of the plan. Even if the numbers show the plan was a success, if the qualitative evaluation shows significant dissatisfaction, it will be difficult to view the event in a positive light.

The qualitative evaluation is based on a number of factors, including the survey of the public and event patrons. Also important is the qualitative evaluation provided by those stakeholders who managed the event. If they view the exercise as a failure, it will be difficult to get them to fully commit to subsequent efforts for future planned special

events. Table 10-9 summarizes key topics of a qualitative evaluation.

Table 10-9 Key Topics of a Qualitative Evaluation

TOPIC

- Quality of pre-event information
- Quality of day-of-event information
- Direction provided to the event and at the venue
- Traffic management at the site
- Egress from the venue

Quantitative Evaluation

The quantitative evaluation provides a numerical picture of the event. Figures such as costs, hours saved, incidents handled, and passengers carried provide a view which can be compared with similar events and provide a metric to judge how well the traffic management plan worked. As the saying goes, what gets measured gets done. If that is the case, then involved stakeholders should identify, before the event, what they wish to measure. While computer programs allow any number of items to be tabulated and measured, a good understanding before the event will facilitate the measurement of the key areas identified.

The quantitative evaluation is very useful when conducting a cost/benefit analysis of activities for the planned special event. Knowing where the most benefit was realized for the costs incurred can help in the planning process to see if resources should be reallocated for the next event.

REFERENCES

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